NPL-U36-3-6-3-R5
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462 N. 2929th Road
La Salle, IL 61301
August 11, 2001

RE: #M&H Zinc NPL-U36-2-6-R5

USEPA CERCLA Docket Office
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington D.C.20460

Dear Ms. Singer,
I am writing to encourage and endorse putting the M&H Zinc site onto the NPL. After having lived here all my life and observing the area, then reading the HRS documentation record, it is very apparent that this site needs remediation as soon as possible. The surface water pathway, which was scored for Cadmium is only one of many in play here. As the HRS document also indicates, there is direct contact with the Little Vermilion River through the large ravine which was filled first and then the hillside running parallel to the stream began to be used for dumping. The clinker is in the stream bed and its presence in sand and clinker bars is evident at the junction with the Illinois River, 1.2 miles south of the slag.

As also indicated in the HRS Document, the fishery is affected for an additional 13.8 miles west to a point near DePue, Illinois, site of an EPA clean up at another zinc plant. More importantly, the La Salle City (9,881 pop.) water wells are .75 miles downstream from the M&H slag site. This is a major health concern because the Little Vermilion and Illinois Rivers are the primary recharge source for these wells. I observed the 28.5 score that was based on surface water migration but then there seemed to be a reference to the inhalation route but air wasn't scored. The impact of ingestion should be added to get a more accurate number.

I am writing as a private citizen but I am co-chairmen of a newly formed Watershed Planning Committee for the Little Vermilion River. We are not drafting a group letter at this time since we are new but we have concerns. I am including a page from the most recent USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services Newsletter talking about our committee and some of its early activities and its mission statement. My concerns and goals are evident.

In summary, I am strongly in agreement with the suggestion that steps must be taken to control the introduction of the cadmium, lead, zinc, copper, nickel, chromium and acidic liquid into the waterway which is so vital to the health and safety of humans as well as to the plant and animal population. Bioaccumulation is a slow and permanent occurrence and is devastating to life in every form. Chemical analysis, observation and photographs have all been used to substantiate the HRS report. Now is the time to take the next step toward remediation. I hope you do!

Sincerely,

Dr. Franklin Jasiek

Milestones in the Little Vermilion River Watershed

Putting Practices on the Land

In late September, the LaSalle County SWCD was awarded an Illinois Department of Natural Resources Conservation 2000 grant in the Illinois River Bluffs Ecosystem Partnership. The grant will help restore native habitats, improve water quality, and increase nesting cover in the Little Vermilion River Watershed by providing seed and shrubs at no cost to landowners who are interested in the restoration of critical areas within the watershed.

Watershed Tour

A bus tour of the Little Vermilion Watershed was held on November 4th. The tour featured various stops within the watershed, from its origin north of Mendota to its confluence with the Illinois River in LaSalle.

Mission Statement

Recently, the Little Vermilion Watershed Local Planning Committee appointed officers and developed a mission statement for the project:

> *The mission of the Little Vermilion River Watershed Local Planning Committee is to work in partnership with governmental agencies, local communities, and stakeholders to develop proactive watershed management directives, goals, and techniques for the Little Vermilion River Watershed in an effort to maximize water, soil, air quality, enhance biodiversity, and ensure stream structure stability.*

Submitted by Matt Stafford
SWCD Resource Conservationist

Arnie Leader of the USEPA discusses water quality issues with watershed tour participants at the Little Vermilion River on LaSalle County Highway 13, just south of Troy Grove.